

and the celebrated statues of Adam and Eve covered with the yet more celebrated fig-leaves. It is a villa of the first grade, and splendidly adorned, but the ornaments are, without an exception, so universally indelicate that it was painful to view them in the presence of a lady. . . . Here, if they possessed any interest, might you obtain thousands of stories of her late Majesty, but the time is passed, thank God, for them. Our riots in her favor are the laughing stock of Italy. . . .

Dr. Ciceri, to whom Forbes gave me a letter, is of the greatest use to us at Milan. He is a very singular character and of great importance in this city. We find him extremely courteous, and through him see everything here to great advantage. I was yesterday at the refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie to see the Last Supper. It is in a much better state than I had imagined. The engraving of *Morghen* is very unlike. I do not think the expression of any of the countenances is correct. . . . The pride of *Ciceri* is to be considered an Englishman. He lives among the English, nobility who travel through and reside here, and is their factotum on every subject. He lodges in a palace, and dines every day on a beefsteak. He is known to everybody in Italy, and manages the business of all Milan. He is a sort of intellectual *Paul Pry*, the best of *cicerones*, of course, and with a little management the most courteous of men, but he is a little surly at first, because he conceives that that is keeping up the English character. However, our acquaintance with him is extremely fortunate. My fellow travellers are very kind and very accommodating. *Austen* is particularly learned in coins and postilions and exchange. We have met lots of people whom the Austens know, and these occasional *rencontres* are very agreeable. I meant to have written a whole letter about La Scala and the ballet here, which ranks almost with tragedy, but my long letter is full. I shall write from here again when I have received yours, or from Venice, where I shall be on Thursday. We travel slowly, which is delightful. Could you but see a few of our countrymen, how much they do and how little they enjoy and understand! The excitement of idiotism I never witnessed before, and it is very ludicrous, but I must introduce you to characters orally. God bless you all.

Your affectionate son,

B. DISBAELI.